

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of this application are respectfully requested. Claims 10, 11 and 17 are allowed. Claims 19 and 20 are added, and claims 1-9, 13 and 16 were previously cancelled. Claims 12, 14 and 15, as amended herein, are submitted for the Examiner's reconsideration.

Applicant expresses appreciation for the allowance of claims 10, 11, 17 and 18.

In the Office Action, claims 12, 14 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Eldridge (U.S. Patent No. 6,482,013). It is submitted, however, that the claims are patentably distinguishable over Eldridge.

The Eldridge patent does not suggest:

a compliant encapsulant disposed between at least one of said flexible leads and said body

as defined in claim 12. Eldridge describes an encapsulating structure that fully encapsulates the base end of the spring contact and an adjoining portion of the spring contact, shown in Fig. 7C, for *tailoring the spring constant* of a contact element. The encapsulating structure is formed in a manner similar to the corresponding structure of the embodiment of Fig. 7B which is described as a "hard material" and which likewise serves to tailor the spring constant of the contact element. Further, Eldridge describes that when a force is applied downwards to the contact end of the spring contact, only *the non-encapsulated portion* of the spring contact element is permitted to deflect, thereby precluding the use of a *compliant encapsulant*. (See col. 19, line 35 - col. 20, line 10). Thus, Eldridge *teaches* away from employing such compliant encapsulants.

It follows that Eldridge does not suggest the combination called for in claim 12 and does not anticipate the claim.

Claims 14 and 15 depend from claim 12 and each further defines and limits the invention set out in the independent claim. Therefore, each of claims 14 and 15 likewise defines a combination that is patentably distinguishable over Eldridge.

Accordingly, the withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102 is respectfully requested.

New claims 19 and 20 depend from claim 12 and each is patentably distinguishable over Eldridge at least for the same reasons. Support for these claims is found in paragraph [0034] of the specification.

As it is believed that all of the rejections set forth in the Official Action have been fully met, favorable reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited. If, however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone applicant's attorney at (908) 654-5000 in order to overcome any additional objections which the Examiner might have.

If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

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Respectfully submitted,

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